

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9510

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 16883

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EG, UR

SUBJECT: SOVIET AMBASSADOR ON EGYPTIAN-USSR RELATIONS

1. SOVIET AMBASSADOR POLYAKOV, ALLUDING TO CURRENT GOE EFFORTS TO NORMALIZE RELATIONS WITH USSR, TOLD ME MOSCOW IS INCLINED TO MOVE SLOWLY. HE DESCRIBED FAHMY-GROMYKO MEETING IN SOFIA AS A PRELIMINARY EXCHANGE OF VIEWS, BUT MADE IT CLEAR SOVIETS DO NOT YET FEEL GOE HAS TAKEN THE NECESSARY STEPS TO WARRANT A TANGIBLE SOVIET RESPONSE.

2. ASKED IF GROMYKO AND FAHMY WOULD MEET AGAIN SOON, POLYAKOV NOTED THAT THE SOFIA COMMUNIQUE HAD INCLUDED LANGUAGE INDICATING THAT THE TWO FOREIGN MINISTERS WILL MEET AGAIN. THIS, HE INSISTED, HAD BEEN INSERTED AT THE SPECIFIC REQUEST OF THE EGYPTIAN SIDE. WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING THE POSSIBILITY OF A SECOND FAHMY-GROMYKO MEETING, HE CLAIMED NO SUCH GET-TOGETHER IS PLANNED FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE. INSTEAD, 1977 SOVIET-EGYPTIAN TRADE PROTOCOL TALKS WILL TAKE PLACE NEXT MONTH. AS HE VIEWED IT, THE EGYPTIAN POSTURE DURING THOSE TALKS WILL SIGNAL HOW FAR GOE IS WILLING TO GO IN THE CONTEXT OF ITS AVOWED DESIRE TO NORMALIZE RELATIONS. POLYAKOV POINTEDLY OBSERVED THAT GOE'S DEBT TO THE SOVIET UNION IS SIZABLE AND THAT USSR EXPECTS GOE TO MAKE SOME SATISFACTORY OFFER TO REDUCE THAT DEBT. (HE CONFIRMED THE "143 MILLION RUBLE" FIGURE TRADE BALANCE WHICH
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PRIMIN SALEM HAD EARLIER TOLD US REPRESENTED GOE'S PAYMENT TO SOVIET UNION FOR 1976.) THEREAFTER, DEPENDING

UPON OTUCOME OF TRADE TALKS, A SECOND MEETING BETWEEN THE TWO FOREIGN MINISTERS MIGHT TAKE PLACE.

3. POLYAKOV DID OBSERVE THAT, DESPITE GOE AVOWED EFFORTS TO NORMALIZE RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIETS, EGYPTIAN POLICY STILL TILTS MARKEDLY TOWARD THE US. IN VIEW GOE'S PROFESSED NON-ALIGNMENT, SOVIET UNION BELIEVES EGYPTIANS SHOULD ADOPT MORE BALANCED POSTURE BETWEEN THE TWO SUPER POWERS.

4. POLYAKOV NOTED THAT FAHMY IS CONTINUALLY PRESSING SOVIETS TO TAKE A NEW INITIATIVE TO CALL FOR RESUMPTION OF GENEVA CONFERENCE WITHOUT DELAY AND WITH PLO PARTICIPATION. SOVIETS, ACCORDING TO POLYAKOV, ARE IN AGREEMENT THAT GENEVA SHOULD BE RECONVENED, BUT RECOGNIZE USG "TRANSITION" PERIOD DICTATES AGAINST ANY RESUMPTION NEXT MONTH OR SO. POLYAKOV CLAIMED THAT FAHMY HAS ALSO BEEN URGING SOVIETS TO PRESENT A "PLAN" OF THEIR OWN TO RECONVENED CONFERENCE, BUT THAT MOSCOW IS TEIPID ON THIS IDEA.

5. POLYAKOV DENIED THAT SOVIETS HAVE RESUMED ARMS OR SPARE PARTS SHIPMENTS TO EGYPT. ANY SUCH DEVELOPMENT, HE ASSERTED, WILL ONLY BE CONSIDERED IN CONTEXT OF A MORE FORTHCOMING GOE POSTURE TOWARD THE SOVIET UNION THAN IS CURRENTLY THE CASE.
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